



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Tuesday, December 22, 2020 –4:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

This meeting will be held via video conference, consistent with Gov. Baker's temporary modifications to Open Meeting Law due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Joanne Semanie
Absent: Selectman Ed Silva
Administrative Staff: Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III Administrative Assistant
Staff: Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., a quorum of the board present via remote participation.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Silva: **absent**

Vice-Chair Semanie: **yes**

Background: This group of individuals (self-titled "Covid Group") has been meeting weekly for the past few months to listen to the state Covid-19 briefings and discuss ongoing matters in town related to the pandemic. As Board of Health Clerk Joanne Semanie was elected last Saturday to the Board of Selectmen, there is now a quorum of the board present during these weekly meetings, and as such, must take place in open session.

Covid Discussion: The following points/topics were addressed during discussion:
Maggie Rice, Board of Health Chair reported the following:

- Chair Rice reported that FRCOG was overwhelmed with the contact tracing due to increase of cases in the area
- Rowe School is doing well
- Vaccines to essential workers will be available in a few more weeks and the drive through clinics for the general public will come later and not certain how long as yet
- Urge vigilance over the Holidays and limit contact to be encouraged

The following message was prepared for the Public Notification System:

"Good Evening Rowe Residents,

The following is the weekly message regarding the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Topics include vaccination rollout, and guidelines on how to stay safe between now and when a vaccine becomes available to you.

As of now, front-line health-care workers and only a few others are being vaccinated due to limited supplies, but over the coming weeks and months, this will expand to include others. The State of Massachusetts has established a phased approach to allocate vaccination doses as they become available. The next groups of people who may receive vaccination will include emergency service providers, followed by non-COVID healthcare workers. After that, workers who encounter lots of people on a daily basis (such as educators, public works employees, and grocery store clerks) will be next in line, followed by people who are aged 65 or older. After these groups have been provided with the opportunity to receive vaccination first, the general public will be allowed to seek vaccination. As of now, it is expected that all people in Massachusetts who want to be vaccinated will have the opportunity to receive a vaccination by sometime mid-2021. If at any time the State of Massachusetts substantially changes or updates the priority of various groups for vaccination, we will provide that information to you. We are paying very close attention to distribution and availability of the coronavirus vaccines, and will provide information regarding time, place, and requirements for local vaccination clinics as we receive it.

Between now and when the preponderance of people are vaccinated, it is more critical than ever that we continue efforts to curb the spread of the virus. In Massachusetts, daily deaths from the coronavirus have nearly tripled since the low-point in early September. Much of the current spread is the result of the change in our behavior due to the colder weather, and in no small part due to gathering over the holiday season.

This increase in numbers should serve as a reminder that efforts to reduce exposure to others, to remain steadfast in mask-wearing whenever in public, to maintain distance when around others, to minimize time in indoor public spaces, and whenever possible to limit holiday travel all serve to keep ourselves and each other safe.

These days and weeks are clearly becoming the most difficult in this pandemic, but the end is in sight. However, we must remain steadfast to minimize the damage and loss as we begin relegating this pandemic to history.

The Rowe Coronavirus task force will continue to keep you updated on these and other coronavirus topics on an on-going basis, typically with weekly updates or when prudent.

Thank you, and stay healthy

~Chuck Sokol"

Adjournment:

MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting 4:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Selectman Semanie.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Silva: **absent**


Vice-Chair Semanie: **yes**

Respectfully Submitted,

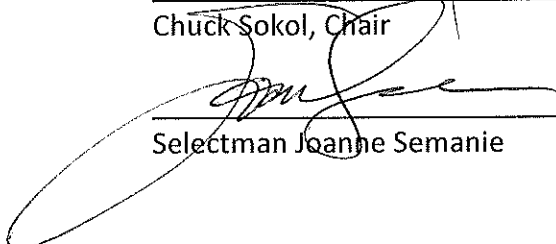
Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: January 7, 2021

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair



Selectman Joanne Semanie

Documents:

- Agenda December 8, 2020